

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: December 28, 2015

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Erin Young, Water Resources Manager
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THRU: Brad Hill, Utilities Director
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CC: Josh Copley, Jerene Watson, Barbara Goodrich, Leadership Team

SUBJECT: Conserve2Enhance Program

The purpose of this City Council Report is to provide an update on the Conserve2Enhance (C2E) Program and efforts underway to initiate the program in Flagstaff.

BACKGROUND:

The C2E program is a voluntary program that connects water conservation and community action by creating a funding mechanism for water conservation projects throughout the community. The program was created by the Water Resources Research Center, which is part of the University of Arizona's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. C2E has been making a meaningful difference in southwestern communities since 2010 when its first pilot program began in Tucson, AZ. The initial program has now grown into the largest voluntary water conservation program of its kind. There are currently five programs in Arizona, the most successful being Tucson C2E. Tucson C2E participants have conserved millions of gallons of water and have awarded nearly \$90,000 in grants to water conservation enhancement projects throughout Tucson.

Staff began researching C2E in September 2014 to determine if the program would be of benefit to the Flagstaff community. Believing C2E would be a successful model, staff met with Flagstaff organizations that represent a cross-section of the community to determine interest in the program. These organizations included: Arizona Game and Fish Department, Friends of Flagstaff's Future, Friends of the Rio, Northern Arizona Association of Realtors, Northern Arizona Builders Association, Sierra Club, Springs Stewardship Institute, and Willow Bend Educational Center. All organizations were supportive of the program and agreed to serve on a stakeholder board if the City initiated the program. Additionally, staff presented to the Water Commission and Sustainability Commission for discussion and approval. Both Commissions were also supportive of the voluntary program.

Staff believe that the C2E program has potential for success in Flagstaff. The voluntary program would inspire City of Flagstaff water customers to save water through educational programming. Financial savings realized from water conservation efforts could then be donated to the Flagstaff C2E program and redistributed to the Flagstaff community via grants for water conservation projects.

The C2E program has an established protocol, which would allow City staff to introduce a turn-key initiative. For example, C2E hosts a sophisticated website that provides a suggested pledge amount based on an algorithm of water savings against customer's baseline use. In addition, C2E provides stakeholder development recommendations, promotional collateral templates and marketing tips.

On a future agenda, staff will bring forward a C2E Program Administrative Plan, which will outline such things as program overview, program objectives, and operational procedures.

RECOMMENDATION / CONCLUSION:

This report is for information only